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ABSTRACT

In terms of direct experience, students are limited to their immediate environment--unless that environment is expanded. A school of global education was therefore developed in the Livonia Public Schools (Michigan) to identify and implement ways by which this sought-after awareness could be incorporated into a secondary school multidisciplinary program. The school staff consists of four teachers and a teaching director, plus teachers from various disciplines. This staffing pattern allows for flexible schedules, team teaching, and an interdisciplinary approach to concepts. The curriculum is written so that the academic commonalities of each discipline are interspersed throughout all the disciplines. In addition, the content is presented so that the emphasis is placed on interpretation of events and works using a global perspective, rather than on a chronological spectrum of these events and works. Through such a multidisciplinary program it is possible to develop visual literacy, to appreciate more fully language competency in economics and international relations, to evaluate scientific and technological progress, and to highlight and trace the consistency of reading development across disciplines. What is needed is greater communication and collaboration between teachers of various disciplines and their active participation in contributing to the role of reading as an indispensible means of acquiring skills, various experiences, content knowledge, empathetic ability, and heightened powers of imagination and problem solving. (HOD)

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"THE ROLE OF READING IN GLOBAL EDUCATION: AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH"

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Despite the global instantaneousness of electronic communications, too little is being done in our schools to augment fully communication about the interdependence of the inhabitants on "Spaceship Earth." A few pertinent facts might open some consideration of this problem. The United States is the fourth largest Spanish-speaking nation in the world. One out of three new Americans is an immigrant today, and this figure discounts the 8-10 million illegal aliens presently residing within our borders. The current average newspaper coverage of international events regularly read by Americans is reputed to be less than a column of newsprint per day. Only between 1% and 2% of the average television week on commercial networks features international items -- about the lowest average of 100 nations surveyed by UNESCO. Runners up: USSR and China. This is no surprise when one realizes that in 1975, there were only 429 American staff correspondents working abroad for U.S. news organizations - a tiny cadre for a nation which had 1,774

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daily newspapers, 934 television channels, and 7,500 radio stations. Fewer American correspondents resided abroad than at any other time since World War II, when there were 2,500.

We have read reports in popular magazines that the global awareness of American high school students is abysmal, that 50 percent of sampled 12th graders tested could not identify correctly the Arab country from these four choices: Egypt, Israel, India and Mexico. What has not been widely enough publicized, however, is that fewer than 5% of the teachers trained in the early 70's have had any exposure whatsoever to international, comparative, area and other intercultural courses in their work for certification. (This is according to a 1973 survey conducted by the AACTE.)

In "Communication: Understanding in a Smaller World," an address delivered before the 22nd Annual Sister Cities International Conference, Louisville, Kentucky, August 16, 1979, Ambassador John E. Reinhardt cites, "Over 90% of the U.S. public school teachers have not had in-depth exposure to non-western cultures even though these cultures include a majority of the world's population. Furthermore, most American newspapers employ no foreign affairs specialists on their staffs; this might be termed academic considering that the general public, nationwide, reads hardly half a column a day of international news." Ambassador Reinhardt concludes that unless we can make ourselves capable of participating in the shaping of the new world which is surely going to emerge from the turmoil of this century, then we will find that the world will shape us, and probably not in ways that we would prefer.

What is required, as stated by Dr. Rose Lee Hayden in her speech to the same group, is a cadre of experts about other peoples and cultures; professionals in business and government capable of successfully transacting transnational negotiations; scientists and technicians able to share and extend the frontiers of human knowledge on a global basis; and citizens knowledgeable enough to support tough leadership decisions and capable of responsible participation in a democratic society.

How can this awareness and these experts be developed? One way for students was explained by this author in "The Demise of the English Department," in Teaching English: Reflections on the State of the Art, (Hayden, Ed. Stepnen Judy, 1979), "Global Education calls for a curriculum that will involve students in cultural, scientific, ecological, and economic issues that affect everyone. This curriculum will promote an understanding of the values and priorities of the many cultures of the world, as well as the basic concepts and principles related to world communities. A Global Education curriculum can offer a vital combination of language, literature, and the arts of many cultures, while including all the traditional values of 'English'—that literature and language are a reflection of people, their values and needs, their enemies and heroes, and that language is the living instrument of communication. Global Education aims to increase student awareness of cultural, political, and economic interdependence in the world of the past, present, and future."

The key to this awareness is a combination of reading, choice, and participation. It is clear that in terms of direct experience students are limited to their immediate environment - unless that environment is expanded. This expansion can be done by people, by continued experiences,

by reading, and by other media. The aim of the School of Global Education staff, therefore, was to identify and implement ways by which this sought after awareness could be incorporated in a secondary school multi-disciplinary program. Funding for this came from the Michigan State Department of Education.

The School of Global Education began in the Livonia Public Schools, Michigan, in September, 1978, as a subschool of Stevenson High School. Seventy-five students from grades 10-12 elected to participate. Academically, the Global Education Curriculum was written so that the academic commonalities would be integrated in the curriculum within a global framework. The school has a staff of four teachers and a teaching director, plus teachers from various disciplines: it allows flexible schedules, team teaching, and an interdisciplinary approach to concepts.

In our world, we fill many roles: family, community, religious, national, and international. It is important to many people that we participate in these inter-related systems in responsible ways. To do this effectively, we need certain knowledge and skills. The staff of the Global Education School believes that the person who will profit most from this alternative will be the one who wants to grow toward self-awareness and increasing independence, who wants a different kind of learning experience, who wants a closer relationship with other people, and who is concerned about preparing himself well for the many roles he will have to fill in the world around him. He/she is the student who is open to new experiences, new ideas, and new people. Accordingly, Global Education at Stevenson High School means a project which will involve participants in cultural, scientific, ecological, and economic issues which affect

everyone. It promotes an understanding of the values and priorities of the many cultures of the world as well as the basic concepts and principles related to world communities.

To fully understand the Global Education program it must be examined from many points of view. Academically, the program consists of many disciplines with the major focus on English, social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Other electives can be in such areas as physical education, business, home economics, etc. In a traditional high school setting, all of these subjects are departmentalized as isolates. In Global Education, the curriculum is written so that the academic commonalities of each are interspersed throughout all the disciplines: this interdisciplinary approach actually encourages the continual reinforcement of skills and academic content. In addition, the content is presented so that the emphasis is not placed solely on a chronological spectrum of events and works, but rather on interpretation of these same events and works using a global perspective.

From their first days within the program, students are shown that reading is a crucial skill. Uniform lessons are given as each of the three sequences opens in September in order to determine the initial and improved student abilities in the areas of written composition, spelling, oral facility, vocabulary, comprehension, reading speed, tolerance for study, interest in other cultures, in mass communication, and in sharing ideas. Careful records are kept of these results. The Gates - MacGinitie Reading Test (Level F) is administered.

While, because of the varied content and emphasis of each sequence, many of the experiences and assignments differ, there is, nevertheless, a consistency of approach that is common to all three years. The staff believes in

1. Offering many alternatives along with mandatory basic assignments.
2. Offering a differentiation of reading assignments according to student ability, interest,and personal commitment.
3. Requiring in all book responses a summary and individual critical reaction, no matter how immature this may be.
4. Guiding students to read not for facts alone but for principles of behavior and human motivation.
5. Helping students to become aware and to respond to representative literature and art in global cultures.
6. Offering in all reading the greatest variety both chronologically and geographically.
7. Informing parents what their children are being offered as choices, inviting those parents to participate in class experiences and in shared family reading and viewing plans with printed discussion guides.

A significant factor in the success of the programs is found in ministering to the holistic needs of students in an inter-disciplinary, team taught program. If teachers from several disciplines concentrate on one topic at the same time, students are well-nigh forced to conclude that there are, indeed, relationships between these areas or that these subject areas are individual aspects of a total topic. How this is done

is illustrated in the team plans for one global issue.

TOPIC "HUNGER"

Intro.Activity: Speaker (Bishop Gumbleton, Pres."Bread for the World") - panels - reading of pertinent literature - 30 hour fast

English: Read "Hunger" material & prepare panels with summary notes

Scarlet Letter - Comments on:
- Social Pressure
- Morality
- Values
- Minority Views

Social Studies: Tariffs on food,boycotting, import/export

End of Revolutionary War & U.S. Constitution

Chemistry: Finish off Atomic & Molecular Structure
Begin Food & Nutrition

Math: Skills in Statistics (Population, Food etc.)

Spanish: Discussion of "Hunger" in Spanish plus continuous global projects on Hispanic countries.

Physical Education: Individual contacts in International/American activities & sports

Extension Activity - Evening visits to ethnic restaurants/Inner-city hunger projects in Detroit - read all their literature

Students must see, however, that all their teachers espouse the necessity and the habit of reading; that these teachers read contemporary works not just the "school classics," that, in other words reading is a skill for the present and the future, that reading is a skill for the acquisition of

knowledge and for the expansion of delight. Teachers must be models of the behavior they are attempting to induce in others. All of our students are given lists of past and contemporary world authors and their works annotated orally by the teachers. From this comes not only an increased interest in reading "modern stuff" and best-sellers but also an awareness of other cultures, other locales, other points of view. A particularly apt example of this is found in the ~~British~~ American author Trevanian's book Shibumi. In this, the student, through a fascinating and action-packed plot, is led to an understanding of the separation between the Japanese and the Western (in particular, the American) culture and is given an insight into some disturbing non-American views of World War II. Elie Wiesel's book Dawn gives another non-American view of the problems inherent in terrorism, guerrilla warfare, revolution, emerging nationhood, and other terms with which we are all currently familiar. One response exercise involves not writing a book report but completing a blank world map with all the novel's locales pin-pointed.

We cannot hope to convince young people that reading is a viable and exciting occupation if we limit the reading selections to the past, to the universally acclaimed, or to the non-controversial. Teachers in Global Education must be widely read in order to be good resources and must be willing to face the reality that "best sellers" are 1) what are going to be read, 2) rich sources for discussion and critical examination, and 3) varied enough to offer interest to even the most reluctant reader.

In such a rich, multi-disciplinary curriculum it is possible:

1. To develop visual literacy(e.g. that Japanese "Katakana" is verbal where letters represent sounds while "Konji" is visual because symbols represent concepts; that we know months have elapsed in a film if we see... orange leaves glowing ... (dissolve to)... snow laden branches ... (dissolve to) ... first flowers pushing through melting snow)
2. To appreciate more fully language competency in economics and international relations (e.g. that an international aggravation can be provoked by incompetency on the part of a presidential interpreter;
   that an automobile named "Nova" will not sell in a Latin-American country where the name means "does not work" in Spanish;
   that reading letters by pen-pals in Japan will lead to greater interest and understanding of Japan)
3. To evaluate a scientific and techological progress (e.g. that which leads to ethical decisions earlier considered by the ancient Greeks; those
   various veiwpoints which question whether or not what appears to be progress in crop protection may be ecologically devastating)
4. To highlight and trace the consistency of reading development (across social studies, English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, business etc.)

In addition, it is possible to tie together the sciences, social studies, imaginative literature, mathematics, and the creation of new vocabulary in such topics as energy, war and peace, space and sea exploration, population

and measurement, pollution and conservation, data gathering, and many others. All involve reading.

Outside of the Global Education classes, many students are engaged in individual projects: Cathy's research of her roots has involved her whole family here and in Canada; John has been reading extensively in international aspects of gerontology; Mark continues to investigate the future and the potential of space colonization; Ron, Karen, Sue, and John are researching at a local college the prevention of genocide with a special study of the "The Holocaust."

Direct involvement with citizens of the community is an integral part of Global Education. The staff of the Global Studies Center at Michigan State University have worked enthusiastically to develop curriculum and to find human resources to assist in examining evaluative criteria. There is also an active Parent Advisory Committee which participates not only in the planning but also in the implementation of the school's program. Additional community involvement is achieved through the discovery of local resource people for the global seminars. Each student is further involved in a project where he/she acts as tutor in reading and speaking to people of other nationalities. This is best exemplified in the Federally-funded LASED program where some students go into Detroit's Latino community while others assist in the English as a Second Language Program offered within the Livonia Public Schools.

To be effective, learning must be at least partly-selected by the students themselves; thus, all our students have a reading/research project. Each chooses a global issue, reads what he/she wants, then summarizes both

reading and conclusions for others who, while having pursued a different topic, can learn from sharing this reading as listeners.

There is no conclusion to this program because it represents the beginning. It is one of many educational models which aim to change our lives for the better. As teachers in several secondary school content areas, we do not see reading as an end in itself: we see it as the indispensible key to those vicarious experiences and ultimate understandings without which a global education would be considerably weakened. There are, nevertheless, several observations regarding the future which such a program generates:

1. Change in all aspects of our lives is accelerating so fast we cannot keep abreast but books can and do. We have, therefore, to diversify and intensify our reading to be prepared to choose those alternatives which will be most acceptable for us.
2. New concepts of selective growth and technology will require the imagination and evaluative skills that are stimulated and fostered by reading and discussing that literary fiction which deals with such global issues.
3. By encouraging an increase in well-written, problem-oriented fiction, we can help achieve through reading the difficult goal of acclimating the younger first-world generation to a new life style of voluntary simplicity and sharing which, paradoxically, was once the hallmark of our pioneering predecessors.

4. Reading alerts us to potential decision situations. We are all citizens of one planet: the problems of one nation impinge on the well-being of another. Few of us are able to see first hand the manifestations of these interdependent problems. We rely, therefore, on reading and the other media. It is apparent, then,that in order to avoid being at the mercy of a given point of view, we must develop skills of criticism and a demand for divergent points of view.
5. We have an increasing international responsibility to share ourselves, our fundamental values, our goals with people of other nations. We do this by writing about them, by reading of them, by speaking about them, and by listening to them.
6. Since reading is clearly a significant avenue for teaching people how to understand themselves and others, how to be open-minded, how to evaluate, and how to cope with change when it comes, then educators need to share more precisely what they are doing to prepare the young and to improve the lot of the global citizen.

It is obvious that the foregoing remarks only touch the potential of such an educational program. What is needed is greater communication and collaboration between teachers of various disciplines and their active participation in contributing to the role of reading as an indispensible means of acquiring skills, vicarious experiences, content knowledge, empathetic ability, and heightened powers of imagination and problem solving. Much of this can be done through reading and discussion.